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## DIE GRIECHISCHEN CHRISTLICHEN SCHRIFTSTELLER DER ERSTEN DREI JAHRHUNDERTE.

Herausgegeben von der Kirchenväter-Commission der Königl. Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. (1) *Hippolytus*. Vol. I.: Part I., pp. 374+xxviii; Part II., pp. 309+x. Price, bound, M. 20.50. (2) *Origenes*. Vol. I., pp. 374+xcii. Vol. II., pp. 545. Price of both volumes bound, M. 33. Leipsic: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung. 1897-1899.

We hail the appearance of the first volume of a new and great undertaking which has been made possible by a donation called the Wentzel-Stiftung, founded by Mr. Hermann Wentzel and his wife, Elise, née Heckman. It is devoted to the publication of critical text-editions, with German translations, of the Christian authors of the first three centuries who wrote in Greek, including the apocalyptic, Gospels and the late Jewish writings which have been adopted or somehow recognised by the early Christians, the various apocalypses, sibyls, etc. The New Testament itself is excluded, having already received so much attention as not to be in need of new text-editions or translations. The publisher is J. C. Hinrichs, of Leipsic, a house well known for its enterprise, especially in the line of theological literature. As for the editors, the assistance of the most prominent scholars has been gained, viz., Diels, Gebhardt, Harnack, Loofs, and Mommsen. The much-lamented Dillmann, who died not long ago, appears also as one of the Commission.

Considering the importance of the Christian writings of this period, and the light which a better knowledge of them will throw on the origin of Christianity and the formation of the Catholic Church, the new enterprise must be regarded as of special importance, and will no doubt be accompanied by good results. We cannot expect that the public will support a work which requires so much detail labor, and is practically material only for research. Thus the circle of readers is limited to scholars. A perusal of the patristic literature of this age is upon the whole neither satisfactory nor pleasant. The taste and the religious views have changed so much that the piety of the church fathers is sometimes even repulsive to modern Christians; and the interest is mainly historical and scientific. Yet the problems at stake are by no means irrelevant; they will in the end be of absorbing interest, not only to the theologian in his studies, but to the large masses of Christendom who are anxious to understand the rise of their faith and the history of its evolution. While, therefore, the enterprise will naturally be of great consequence, we cannot expect that considered as a business undertaking it will be very lucrative.

The first volume of the series begins with Hippolytus, one of the most prolific of writers, who lived at the end of the second and the beginning of the third century. He was not a Catholic bishop. He wrote in Greek, and he may have received a large part of his theological education in the East. We have, nevertheless, no reason to doubt the correctness of the historical data we have of him: that he lived at Rome, or rather, in Portus, opposite Ostia, and was banished in the time of Alexander Severus, in the year 235, together with the Roman bishop Pontianus, to Sardinia, where it is supposed he died. A marble statue of him—a work of uncertain

date, but not later than the fifth century—was dug up in Rome, in 1551, and is now preserved in the Vatican. He is represented as seated upon an episcopal throne, wearing the Greek pallium, over which the Roman toga is thrown. On the reverse side of the statue is given an incomplete list of his numerous works.

The first volume of our collection contains Hippolytus's commentary on the Book of Daniel and the Song of Songs, edited and translated into German by Prof. G. Nathanael Bonwetsch, of Göttingen. They are a first edition, and possess therefore especial interest to theologians, which is increased by the fact that the Book of Daniel was the leaven in the dough which started the fermentation of the period of preparation which preceded the origin of Christianity. The Book of Daniel was therefore naturally the most interesting book of the Old Testament to the early Christians, and the commentaries of the Church Fathers on its prophetic visions reflect more than any other writings the early Christian conception of the Old Testament. The commentary on the Song of Songs is of interest because we have now positive evidence of the influence which Hippolytus exercised on Cyril of Alexandria, and on other later Christian writers, among them Gregory the Great.

The second part of the first volume is an edition of the smaller exegetic and homiletic writings of Hippolytus, edited and translated by Hans Achelis, a private-docent of Göttingen. They are of less importance, but contain much detail material, most of which is new.

We miss in the introductory remarks both by Bonwetsch and Achelis, references to Hippolytus's work on the *Refutation of Heresies*, which was discovered on Mt. Athos, in 1842, as an anonymous MS., by Minoides Mynas, a learned Greek who had been commissioned by the French government to search for such treasures. An English translation of this important work which is one of the most important sources concerning the heresies of the early Christians, by the Rev. S. D. F. Salmond, has been embodied in the "Ante-Nicene Christian Library" (Edinburgh, 1868-1869). The relation of the commentaries of Daniel and the other writings of Hippolytus to his comprehensive work on Christian Heresies, and a corroboration or refutation of its genuineness, appears to be of too much importance to be dismissed without mention.

The edition of the text is, as was to be expected of the editors, excellent; the type and paper leave nothing to be desired; the introductory remarks are concise, perhaps too concise, and might have been more complete. The book would unquestionably have gained in usefulness if the authors had been more explicit as to the importance of Hippolytus and his works. We hope that later volumes which will probably contain further writings of the same author will embody a serviceable index, which is missing in the first volume.

While reading the proofs of the present review, we are in receipt of two more volumes published by the Wentzel-Stiftung and comprising two stout volumes of Origen, containing the Greek of his book on *Martyrdom* and that of the eight books against Celsus, edited by Professor Koetschau. Even a superficial examina-

tion (for we have not yet found leisure to do justice to the work) shows that the text-revision is carefully made. The introduction of eighty-four pages gives to the reader all the necessary information of this most prominent church father. On account of the importance of the books of Origen, we hope to give a further analysis of Professor Koetschau's edition.

P. C.

ZOROASTRIANISM IN THE LIGHT OF THEOSOPHY. Being a Collection of Selected Articles from the Theosophical Literature. Compiled by *Nasarvanji F. Bilimoria*. Pp., 362+xxiv. Bombay: "Blavatsky Lodge," Theosophical Society. Madras: Headquarters, Theosophical Society, Adyar. London Agents: The Theosophical Publishing Society, 26 Charing Cross, S. W.

The articles collected in this volume possess different values, and while they are full of vague ideas, as is usually the case with theosophical literature, they also contain suggestive thoughts, which will prove valuable hints to students of Zoroastrianism. The chief editor, Mr. Nasarvanji F. Bilimoria, is one of the most important contributors, and his articles touch upon the most important points, such as the "sacred haoma tree." Other writers represented are H. S. Olcott, Kharsedji N. Seervai, N. D. Khandalvala, B. E. Unwala, Walter R. Old, Baker Hudson, and Alexander Wilder. The articles are entitled: "The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion," "The Septenary Nature of Man," "The Sun as a Symbol of Ahura-Mazda," "Philosophy and Ethics of Zoroaster," "Sun-worship and Fire-worship," "Transmigration in the Avesta," "The Ceremonies," etc., etc. A great number of the contributors being Parsis, the book may fairly be considered a sign of the interest which they take in their venerable religion. The influence of Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant upon the style of reasoning is apparent; but the general spirit of the book is praiseworthy, and we cannot do better than to repeat the following lines of Prof. W. M. Flinders Petrie, in a letter to the secretary of the Parsi Panchâyet, Bombay: "I need hardly say how gladly I should do anything I could to forward research in the Irânian regions; and what satisfaction it is to see the able descendants of so noble a race turning their attention to research in their history and origins."

P. C.

VORLESUNGEN ÜBER DIE PRINCIPE DER MECHANIK. Von *Ludwig Boltzmann*. Erster Theil. Mit sechszehn Figuren. Leipsic: J. A. Barth. 1897. Pp., 241. Price, 6 M.

Professor Boltzmann, the versatile and indefatigable occupant of the chair of theoretical physics in the University of Vienna, has been hovering of late years with peculiar predilection over the problems that unite, or rather separate, physics from philosophy, and his views, both from their outspokenness and their intrinsic fitness, deserve consideration. Two scientific thinkers seem to have furnished the greater part of the stimulus to his reflexions—Hertz and Mach—and in express or tacit reference to these men he has developed his views.